PRESS NOTICE

WILLIAM N. NETTLES
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

*1441 Main Street, Suite 500 * Columbia, SC 29201 * (803) 929-3000*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT PERSON: Beth Drake
                    Beth.Drake@usdoj.gov
                    (803) 929-3000

JURY CONVICTS CALIFORNIA MEMBER OF DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION

Columbia, South Carolina– United States Attorney William N. Nettles stated today that a federal jury convicted Juan Calderon, age 34, of San Bernardino, California, for conspiring to possesses with the intent to distribute and distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine, 280 grams or more of crack cocaine, and 1000 kilograms or more of marijuana. The jury reached its guilty verdict late on the afternoon of May 3rd, after three and a half days of trial.

The drug trafficking organization was headed by a man named Justin Jenkins, whose network of distributors sold millions of dollars worth of cocaine, crack cocaine, and marijuana in the Upstate of South Carolina. Cristian Escobedo-Mendoza, who was based in Desert Hot Springs, California, was a source of supply for Jenkins for cocaine and marijuana. Calderon was one of Escobedo-Mendoza's lieutenants.

During his involvement in the organization, Calderon delivered drugs to tractor-trailers that were bound for South Carolina, supplied drugs directly to Jenkins when Escobedo-Mendoza could not, installed a hidden compartment in a vehicle the organization used to transport drugs, and received thousands of dollars Jenkins deposited in Calderon's bank account to pay for drugs Escobedo-Mendoza sold him.

Calderon was the last of over twenty defendants to be convicted in this case, and he has not yet been sentenced. Statutorily, Calderon faces a minimum of 20 years in prison and a maximum of life imprisonment.

The Drug Enforcement Administration partnered with local law enforcement in Greenville, South Carolina, and multiple municipalities in California to investigate the case. Andy Moorman and Lance Crick with the United States Attorney's Office prosecuted the case.